

CROWNOVER, ARTHUR, SR.
(1874-1942)
PAPERS
1880-1942

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INTRODUCTION

This finding aid focuses on the papers of Arthur Crownover, Sr., lawyer and judge, born at Alto in Franklin County, Tennessee, on November 16, 1874. Spanning the years 1880-1942, the papers contain numerous court records concerning lawsuits and lower court decisions which were appealed to the Court of Appeals, Middle Section of the State of Tennessee. Also contained within the collection is extensive correspondence between Judge Crownover and J. Ray Hickerson, a former law partner in Winchester, Tennessee. In addition, there is copious correspondence and reports concerning the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. The collection also comprises documents created by Judge Crownover's son, Arthur Crownover, Jr., in the form of court records while the latter was practicing law in Nashville, Tennessee in the 1930s and early 1940s. Other items within the collection include account books, estate papers, financial documents, land records, legal documents, photographs, programs, school records, speeches, and writings.

The materials were donated by Arthur Mader, a grandson of Judge Crownover, of Nashville, Tennessee in 1995. The unprocessed materials had been stored for several years in conditions that lacked humidity and temperature control prior to their transfer to the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

The collection measure approximately 11.0 cubic feet. Several printed items, including college yearbooks, were transferred to the library section before the collection was arranged. There are no restrictions on the material. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Arthur Crownover, Sr., Papers may be made for scholarly research.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

- 1874 November 16, born in Franklin County, Tennessee, the son of William and Laura (Montgomery) Crownover.
- 1895 Received his LL.B. degree at the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee.
- 1895- Practiced law at Winchester, Tennessee, as a member of the firms of Billingsley and Crownover, Crownover and Crabtree, Estill and Crownover, and Crownover and Hickerson.
- 1900-1904 County attorney of Franklin County.
- 1906 April 26, married at Donaldsville, Louisiana to Emma Sims.
- 1914-1918 First chairman of the Tennessee Highway Commission
- 1922 Manager of Gov. Austin Peay's campaign.
- 1923 Appointed to the old court of Civil Appeals (now the Court of Appeals) by Gov. Austin Peay to serve out an unexpired term.
- 1924, 1926, 1934 Elected and reelected to the Court of Appeals.
- 1935 President of Civitan International.
- 1938 Honorary Doctor of Civil Laws degree from the University of the South where he was a trustee.
- 1942 June 16, died in Nashville, Tennessee.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Arthur Crownover, Sr., Papers, containing approximately 2,000 items, span the period 1880-1942, although the bulk is concentrated in the years 1906-1942. The collection is composed of account books, advertisements, associations, institutions, etc., broadsides, cards, certificates clippings, correspondence, court records, estate papers, financial documents, genealogical materials, insurance papers, land records, legal documents, programs, photographs, publications, school records, speeches, addresses, University of the South correspondence and reports and writings.

A major portion of the collection consists of court records spanning Crownover's law career. Between 1895-1923, Crownover practiced law in Winchester while a member of several law firms. In 1923 he was appointed to the old court of civil Appeals (now the Court of Appeals), and subsequently served as an assistant justice and later as Chief Judge.

Judge Crownover served as a layman on the Board of trustees of the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee for many years. As a result of his long tenure there is a large file of correspondence and reports in the collection covering the period 1913-1942.

Among the prominent correspondents in the collection are such names as Governor Austin Peay, Henry H. Horton, and Prentice Cooper; F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover; and U.S. Senator Cordell Hull.

Both Arthur Crownover, Sr., and his son Arthur, Jr., were members of the civic organization Civitan International. The former served as president, 1935-1936. There is a separate file in the collection of this organization which includes correspondence, programs and reports of local Civitan activities. Among the photographs are photos of Arthur Crownover, Sr., and former law partner Ike W. Crabtree and Judge Floyd Estill.

There is a large file for the Elk Mining Co., of Kelso, Tennessee. As a branch of the Monsanto Chemical Co., the Elk Mining Co., was chartered in 1906 to mine and sell phosphate rock in Lincoln County, Tennessee. Arthur Crownover, Sr., was one of the original stockholders. The file contains correspondence, court records, legal documents, minutes of the annual stockholder's meeting and stock certification.

The Arthur Crownover, Sr., Papers provides valuable information on a prominent legal family in the first half of the 1900's in Middle Tennessee.

CONTAINER LIST

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